

MARVEL

510

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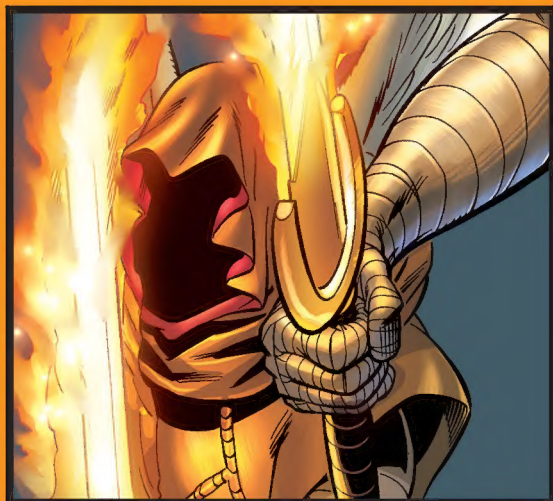
Fantastic Four[®]



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THE FANTASTIC FOUR

- 1** A team—and a family—of adventurers, explorers and imagonauts, the Fantastic Four lead lives both ordinary—and extraordinary. As of today:
- 2** The team has battled Victor Von Doom twice in rapid succession, and they bear the scars—some external, far more of them internal. Doom, having transferred his mind into Ben Grimm's rocky form, craftily manipulated Reed into obliterating his enemy the only way possible—by killing Ben.
- 3** In the weeks following, the trauma of Ben's death has torn the family apart. They have reunited—tensely, and only barely—because Reed has determined that a spark of life remains in Ben's body. In order to restore Ben, however, they'll need his soul—so, using modifications on Doom's own technology, Reed, Sue and Johnny have forced their way into where they know that soul to be:
- 4** Heaven.

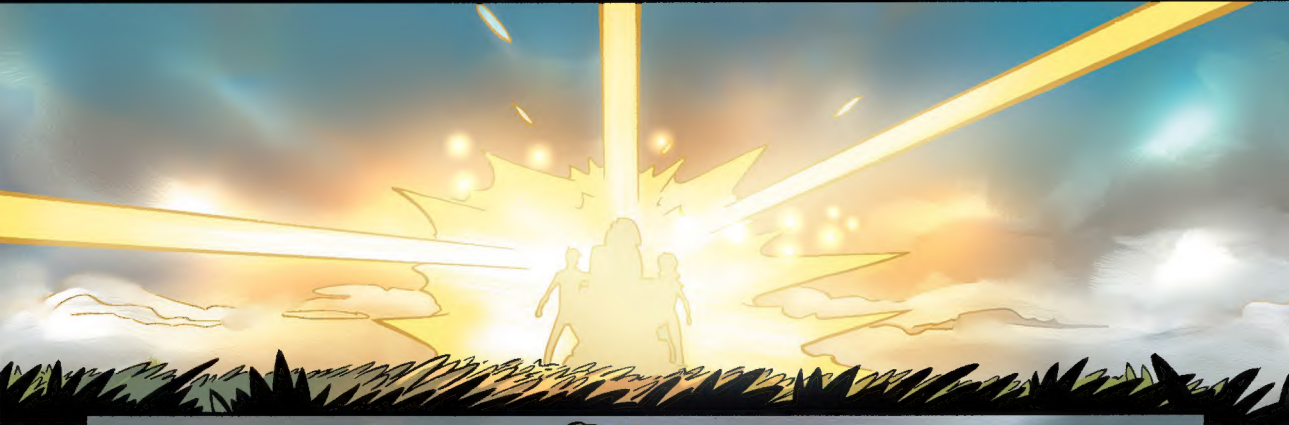


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"HEREAFTER"



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**Part
 2 of 3**



...theory is that we'll each perceive this environment according to our own *pre-existing theological conceptions*.

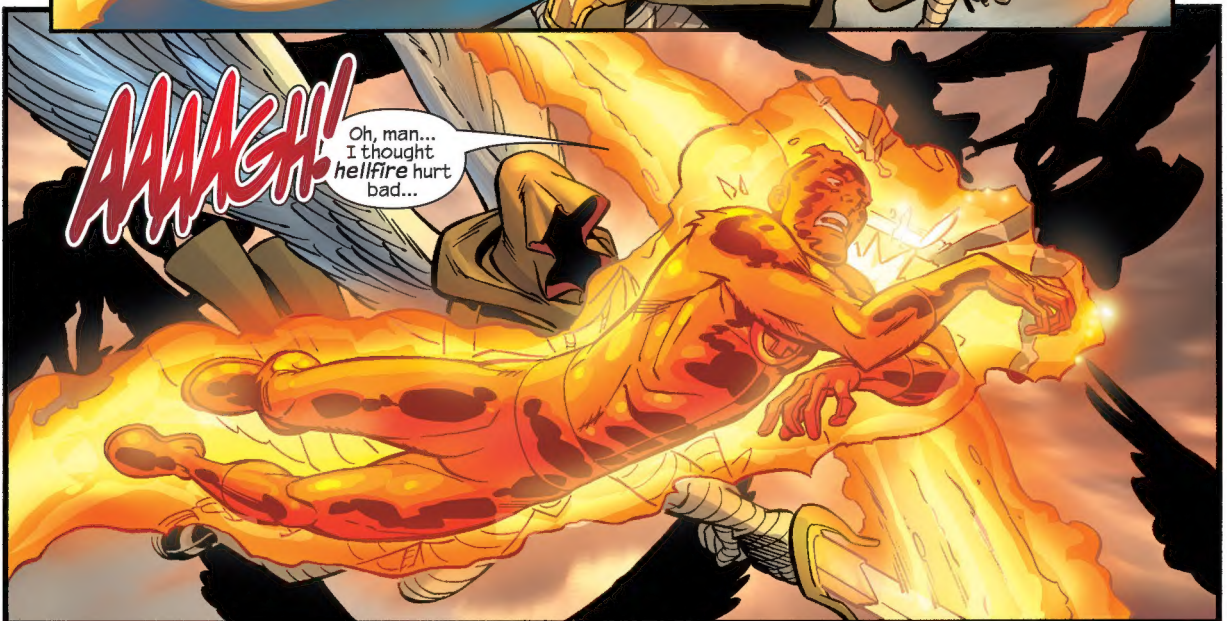
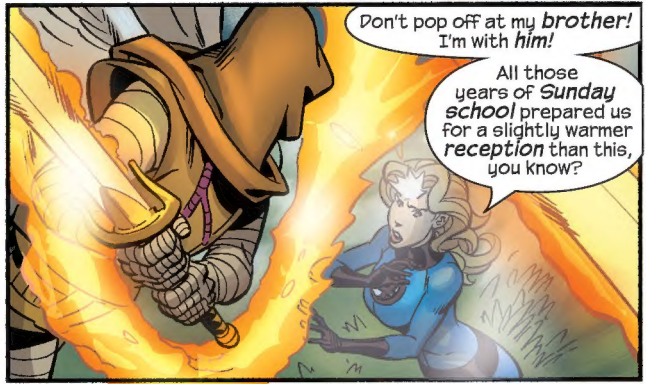


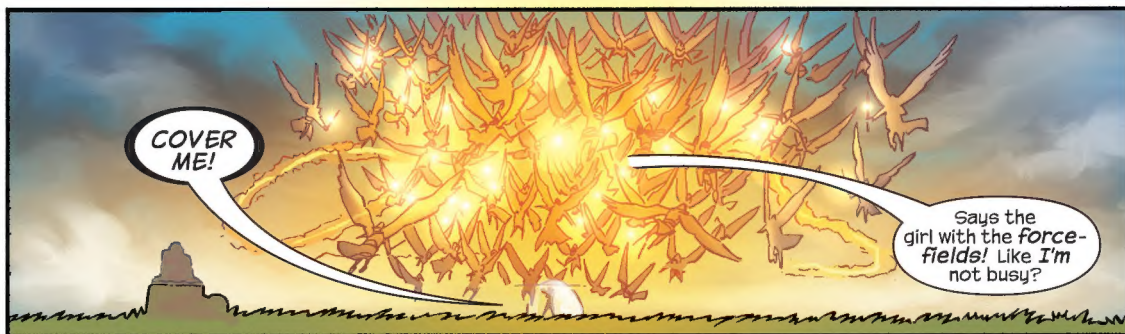
I sincerely doubt the human brain is capable of interpreting the energies we'll encounter on this plane.



Instead, our senses will translate them into images we as mortal beings can *comprehend*.











211 Not far away.

Did they turn around? Tell me they turned around.

There was that hope.

But no.

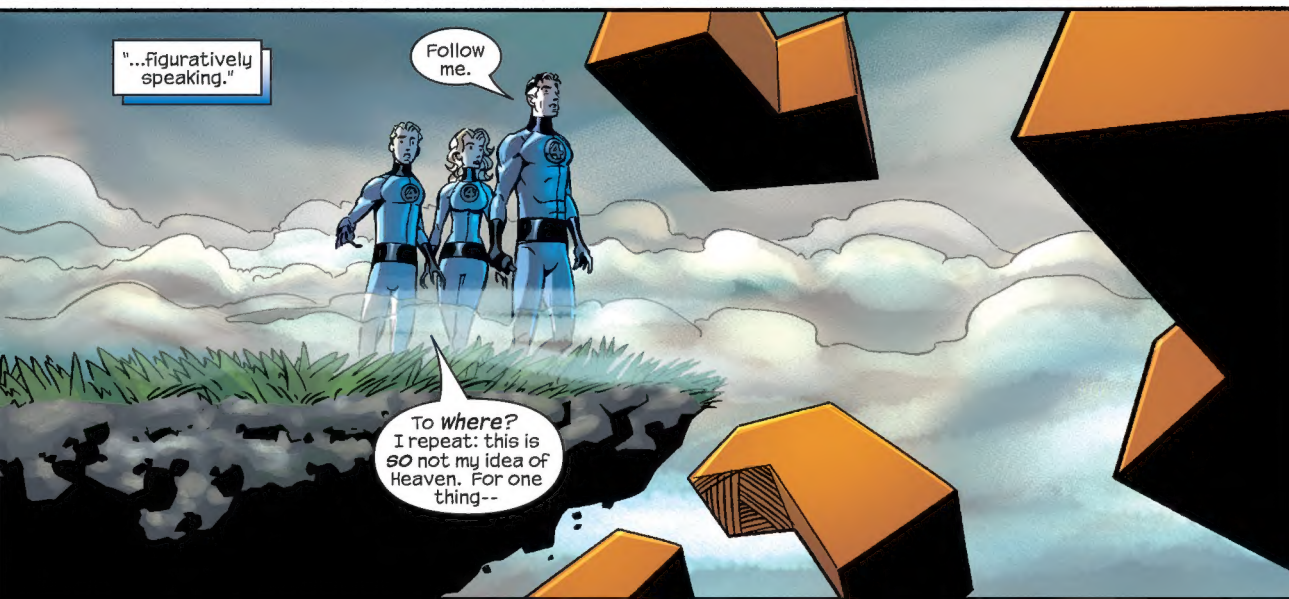


Then let me talk to Reed.

Can't, Ben. Too many rules are being bent as it is.

Everyone here knows what's at stake. We'll just have to hit your friends *harder* once they're completely through the *veil* and hope that sends them packing.

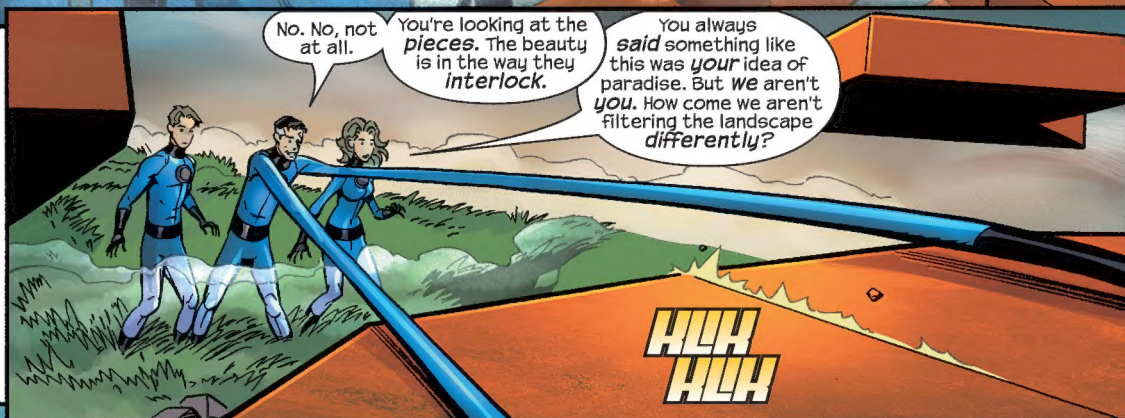
There's a *reason* no one's admitted up here without a hand stamp from St. Peter...

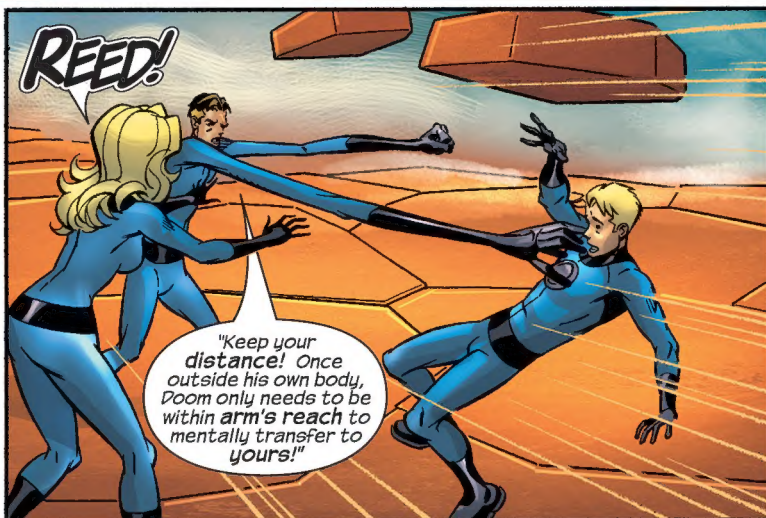


"...figuratively speaking."

Follow me.

To where? I repeat: this is *so* not my idea of Heaven. For one thing--







He was my friend, too.
I'd do anything to have him back.

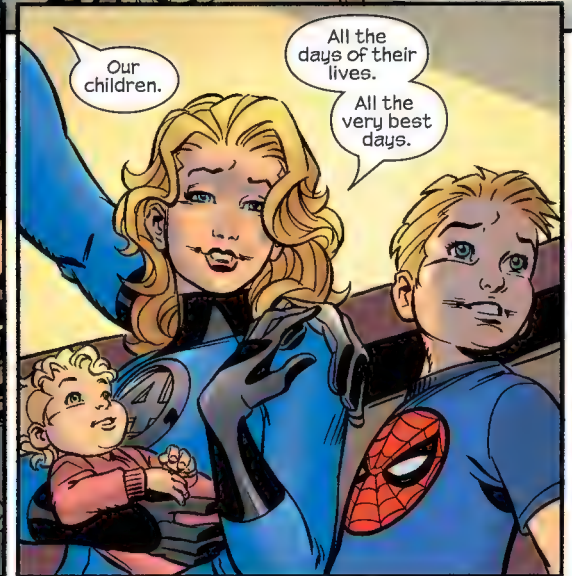
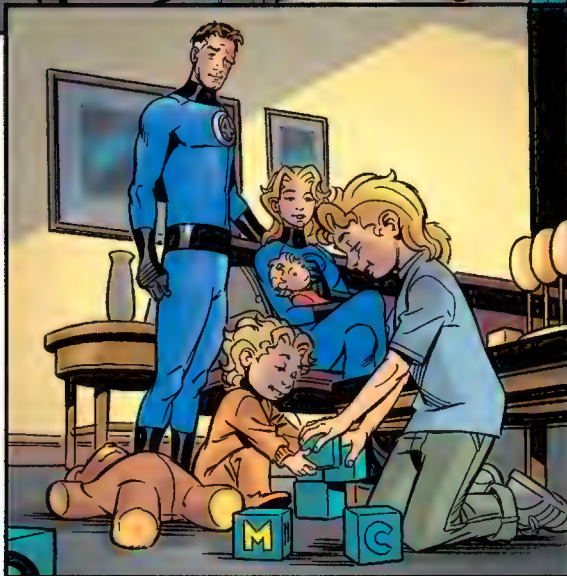
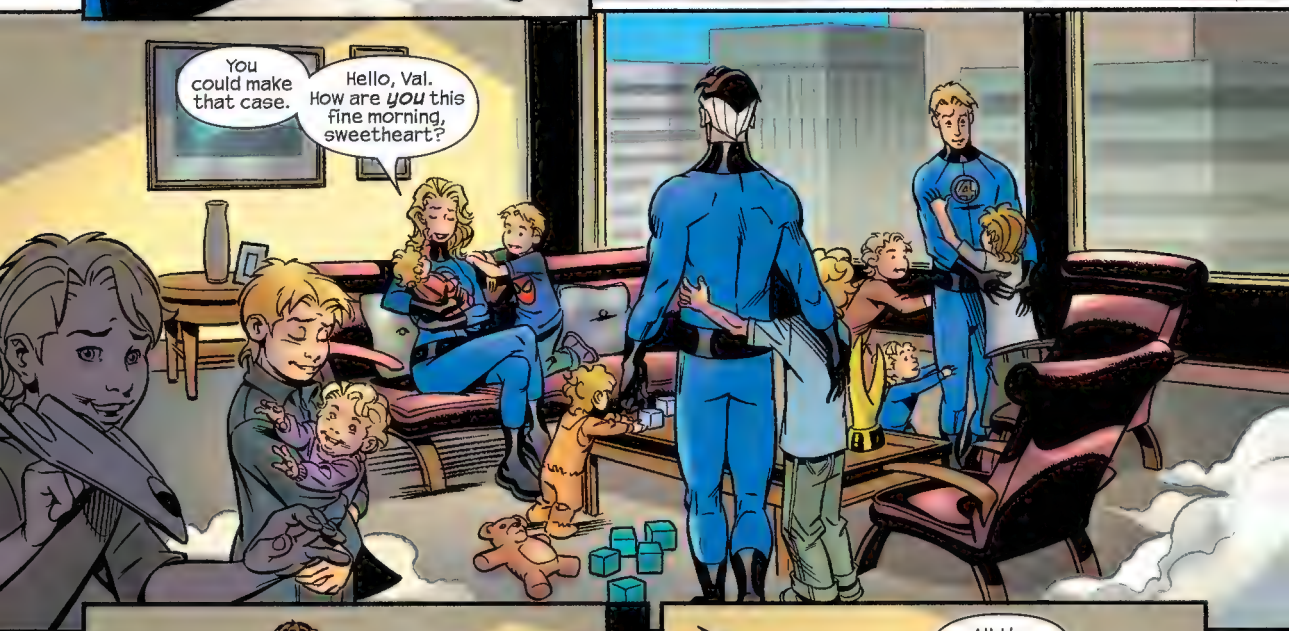


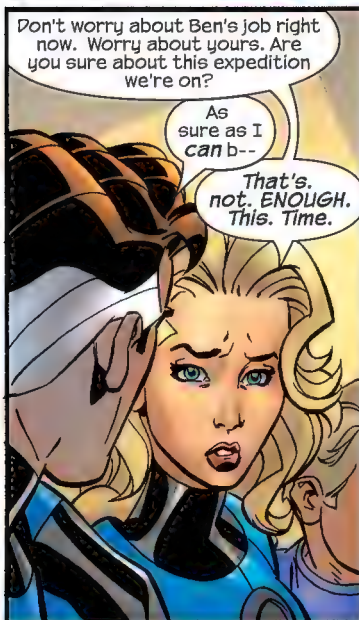
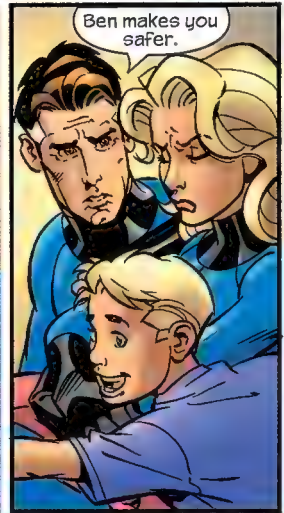
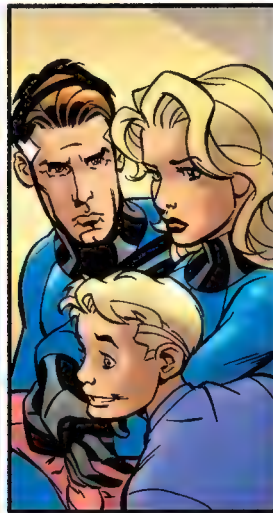
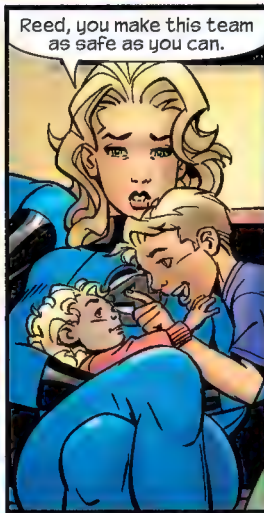
Mm-hmm.
Reed, he means it. You don't have a *monopoly* on that. It's why we're *here*, right?
Both of you, stay *focused*. I admit our surroundings don't make a whole lot of *sense* to me--

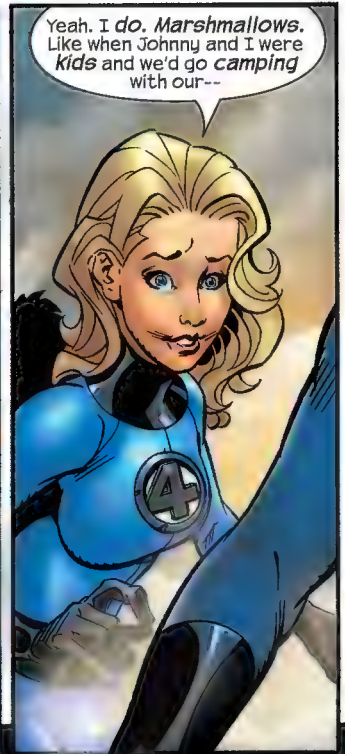
HLLH

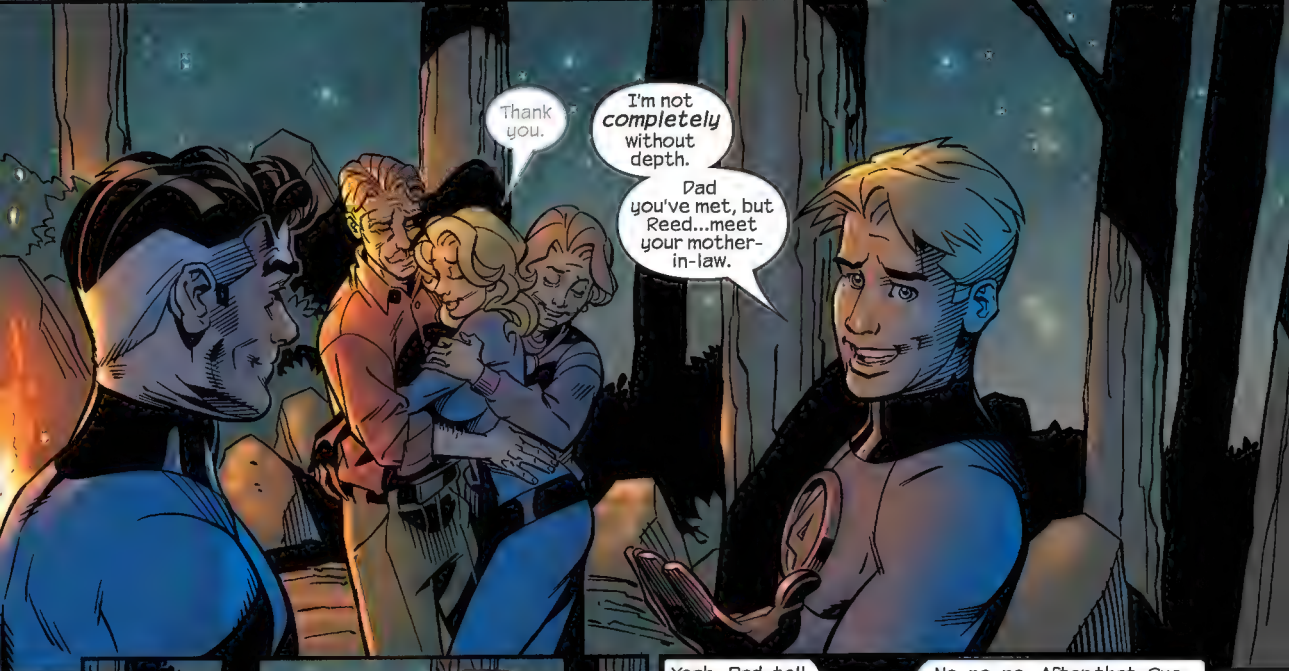


--but I trust they mean something to Reed.
Let's move on.









Thank you.

I'm not **completely** without depth.

Dad you've met, but Reed...meet your mother-in-law.



Hello, Mary. It's a pleasure.

Likewise. I only wish this were a happier reunion.

?



Yeah. Dad, tell them what you told me.

Son, for the last time, it never **occurred** to us to ask who really killed JFK...!

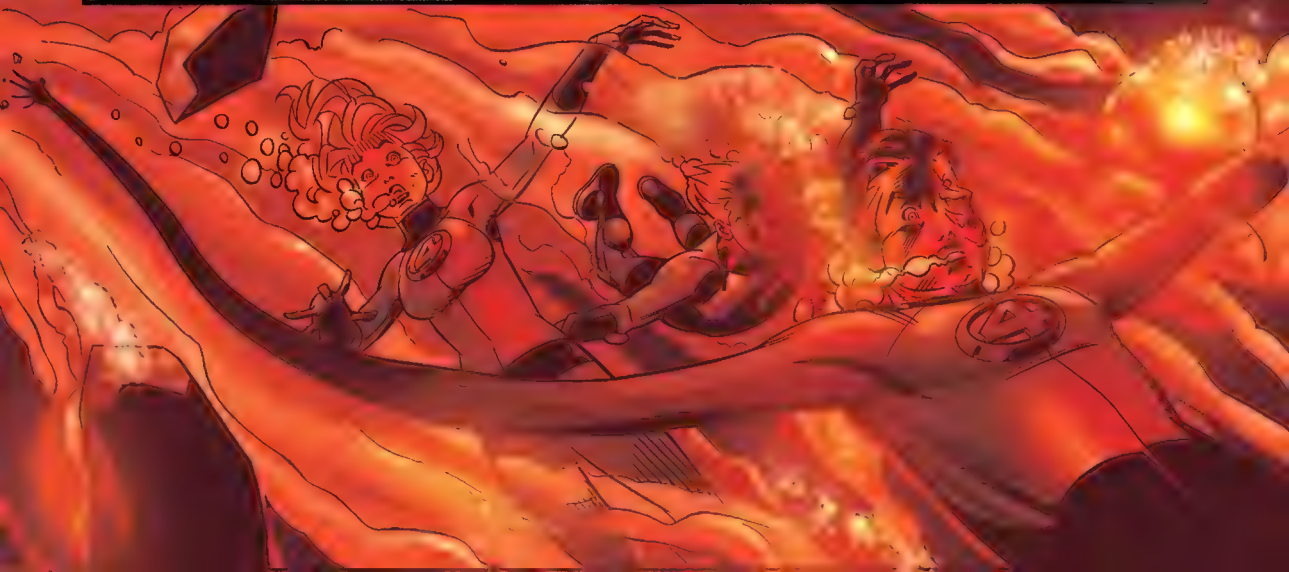
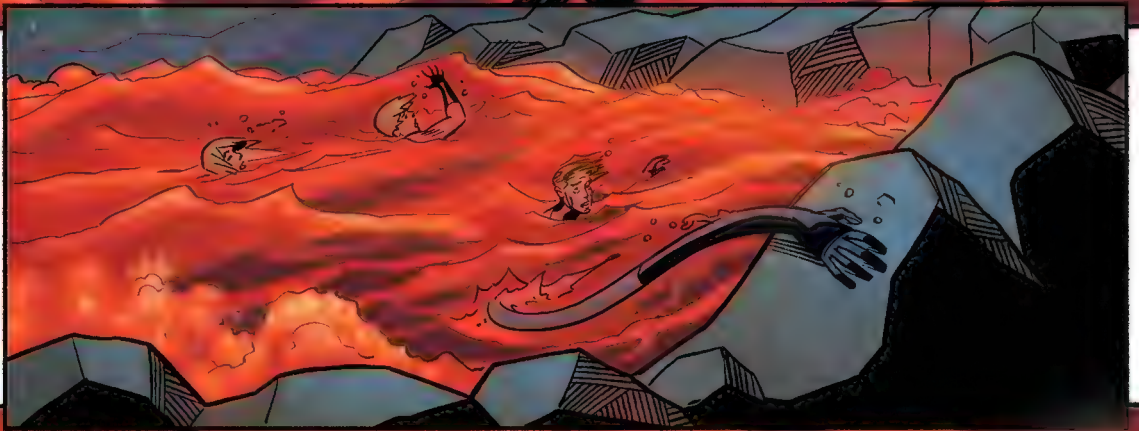
No, no, no. After that. Sue, your instincts were **dead-on**. Something **is** bogus about our being here.

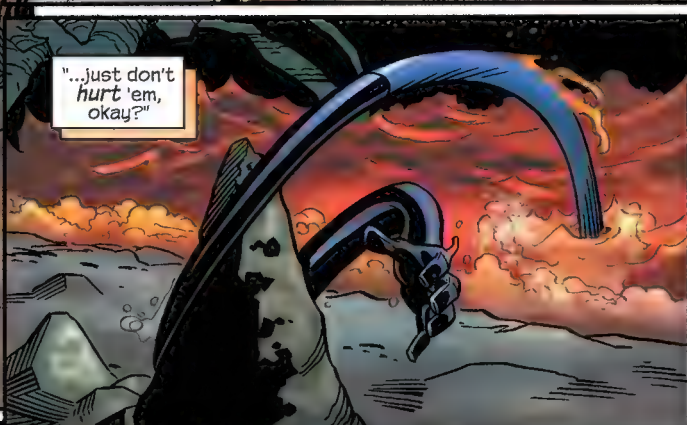
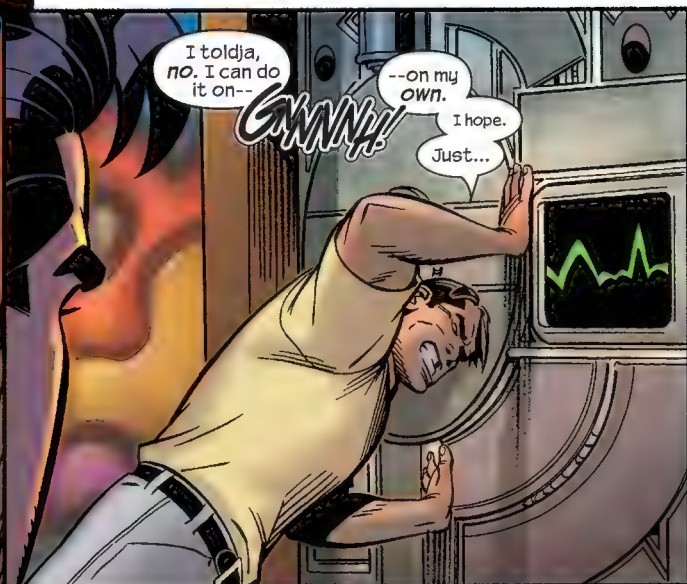


We've come to **warn** you. You must go home **now**, before he starts playing **rough**.

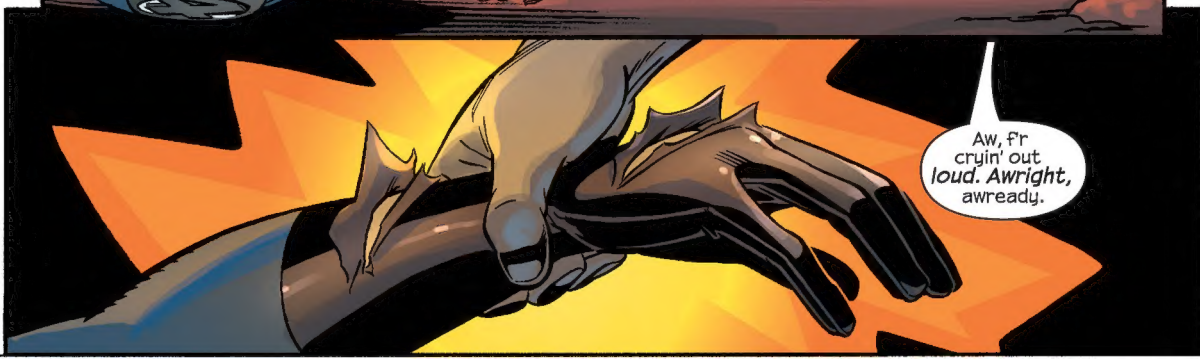
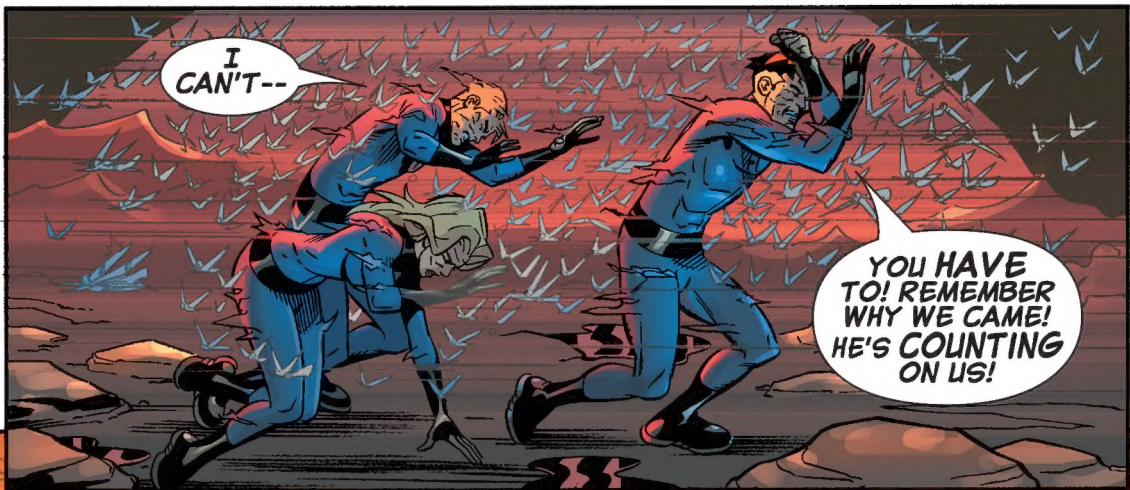
Who?

Too late.











Why's it
always *me* that's
gotta do th' *heavy*
liftin' around
here...?

Ben...?



What, you
were expectin'
this handsome face
t'be *orange*
rock?

This is
Heaven, not
Jersey.

It's
good t'be
together
again...

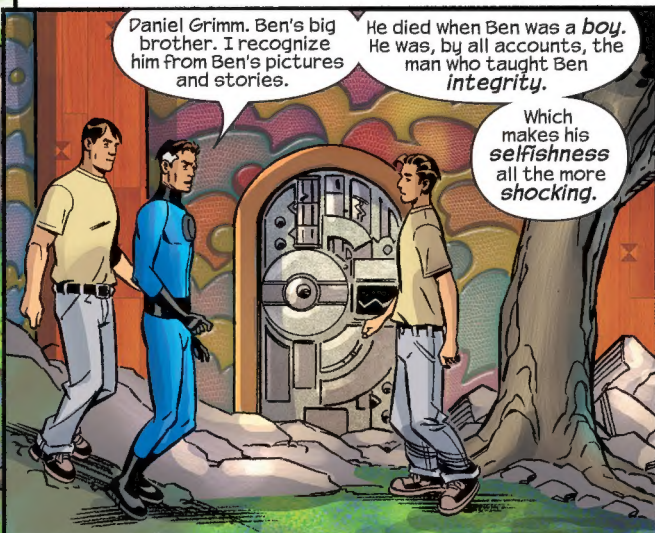


...one
last
time.



No. No, Ben, you don't understand.
Your body's still *alive* on *Earth*.
You don't *belong*
here.

That
much *is*
true. Isn't
it, Ben?





...but he can't do it *unaided*.

Danny--!

Reed can help you, Ben. In fact, he's the only one who *can*.

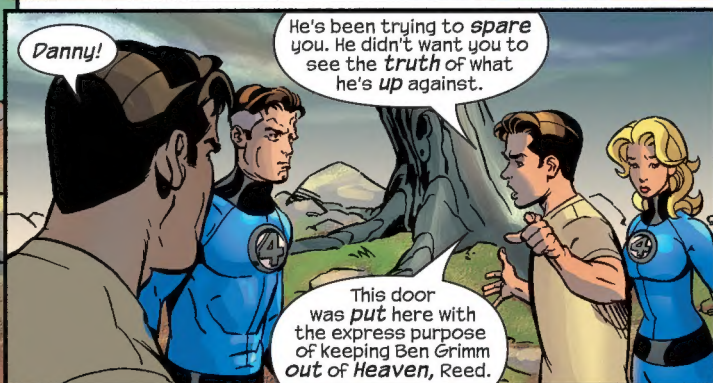


Danny, *don't*.

Sorry, brother. I'm here for *you*, not for them.

I'm not the one who's been pushing you *away*, Dr. Richards. It was *Ben*.

Ben, is that true? Why--?



Danny!

He's been trying to *spare* you. He didn't want you to see the *truth* of what he's *up* against.

This door was *put* here with the express purpose of keeping Ben Grimm *out* of Heaven, Reed.



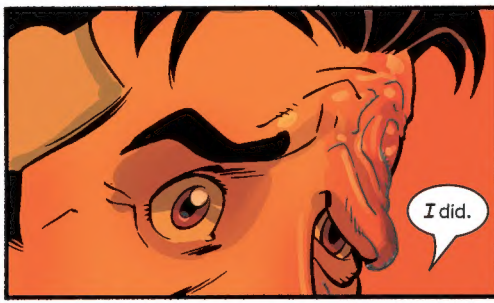
Now, take a good look at its *design* and *construction*... a good, *hard* look...

...and see if you can tell who *built* it.

...



Oh, my Lord.



I did.

4 TO BE CONCLUDED